Chrome Developer Tools

Jason Sullenger

Bellevue University

The Chrome developer tools offered by Google are an effective tool used to fine tune a

webpage. Three important areas of the DevTools are the elements panel, the console panel, and

device mode. Within these areas, there are many features and tools to help with the overall

functionality of your page. The most important benefit is the fact that these tools enable you to

edit your page in real-time while only using your browser.

The first area I will review is the elements panel. "The Elements panel of the Chrome

Developer Tools is used to inspect and modify the DOM and CSS...changes to the DOM and

CSS done in the Elements panel are displayed right as they are made." ("Learn How to Inspect

Element Chrome: Chrome Tools in a Nutshell") You can use this panel to visualize changes you

would like to make to the DOM as well as the page's CSS as any alteration to the code is

immediately on the page. A feature I found useful was drag and drop. "In the Elements panel you

can drag and drop any HTML element and change its position across the page." ("A list of cool

Chrome DevTools Tips and Tricks", 2018) Another feature that can very useful is DOM

breakpoints. Breakpoints can be applied to your code to help you identify any issues. "Applying

breakpoints to specific lines will break (pause) your JavaScript during execution so that you can

get a better look into what's going on." (Pettit, 2015) This is especially useful for reviewing

Javascript code to see if your data is being handled properly.

Another area used quite often in the DevTools is the console panel. According to Kayce

Basques, the two functions of the console panel are viewing diagnostic information about the

page and running Javascript. (Basques, 2019) While using the console panel, there are some

useful methods. Some common methods recommended by Matt West of TeamTreehouse are: console.assert, console.table, and console.time. Console.assert uses a boolean expression to print an object to the console if it is false. Console.table is used to format data and print it in an interactive table in the console. Finally, console.time is literally a timer for how long a piece of code takes to execute. You use console.time by wrapping a piece of code with console.time and console.timeEnd, and the amount of time elapsed during the execution of the surrounded code is written in the console.

The last area of Chrome's developer tools I will be reviewing is device mode. When you want to experience how your users will see your page on various devices, this mode is what you will use to do it. By clicking the button in the top left hand corner that looks like several mobile devices, you will be able to simulate how that page will look on the selected device. There are several preset devices that you can select immediately, but you can also input custom dimensions if there is a specific device you would like to mimic. Device mode also offers the option to review the site on a remote device as well. Craig Buckler explains that to do this, "Select More tools then Remote devices from the Developer Tools main three-dot menu. Ensure Discover USB devices is checked then attach your phone or tablet and follow the instructions." (Buckler, 2017) After completing this process you can interact with the page via your device or the Chrome browser.

I have just discussed a handful of features offered by Chrome's developer tools as well as some simple tips and tricks that can be used in each of these sections. As long winded as my

previous statements may seem there is so much more offered by these developer tools. When you

decide to take advantage of what they offer you won't have to waste any time installing

unnecessary software because the DevTools are integrated into your Chrome browser.

Works Cited

A list of cool Chrome DevTools Tips and Tricks. (2018, March 20). Retrieved from

    https://flaviocopes.com/chrome-devtools-tips/

Basques, K. (2019, January 29). Get Started With The Console. Retrieved from

    https://developers.google.com/web/tools/chrome-devtools/console/get-started

Buckler, C. (2017, February 15). How to Use Mobile Emulation Mode in Chrome. Retrieved

    from

    https://www.sitepoint.com/how-to-simulate-mobile-devices-with-device-mode-in-chrome/

Learn How to Inspect Element Chrome: Chrome Tools in a Nutshell. (n.d.). Retrieved from

    https://www.bitdegree.org/learn/how-to-inspect-element

Pettit, N. (2015, May 21). 5 Great Hidden Features in the Chrome DevTools. Retrieved from

    https://blog.teamtreehouse.com/5-great-hidden-features-in-the-chrome-devtools